

C-130 Hercules crew chief Tech. Sgt. John Ryan (right) does a post-flight inspection of one of the four turbine engines on his cargo airplane. Sergeant Ryan is with the 746th Aircraft Maintenance Unit.



Contingency aeromedical staging facility (below) Airmen at Balad Air Base, Iraq, wheel a critical-care patient to an awaiting C-17 Globemaster III bound for Landstuhl Army Medical Center, Germany. The patient received his wounds in combat.

by Staff Sgt. David Miller



by Tech. Sgt. Cecilio Ricardo

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by Staff Sgt. Michael B. Keller



Airmen bound for Southwest Asia board a plane at Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D. Nearly 300 Airmen, of the 28th Bomb Wing, deployed in support of operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

Frontline Duty

Airmen provide airpower for the fight

America's Airmen continue doing their duty on the front lines of the war on terrorism. Whether flying close air support missions, gathering intelligence, doing surveillance and reconnaissance, hauling cargo, fixing or fueling jets, providing security or critical care for the wounded, Airmen are on the job, 24-7. It's a job for which they are well trained and suited.

"We accomplish our warfighting mission every day," Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley told the Air Force Association in February. "We're engaged around the world, fighting terrorism and insurgents ... fulfilling our roles as Airmen on the joint team."

In Iraq and Afghanistan, Airmen provide — on demand — the people, special tactics, capabilities and aircraft that combatant commanders need to fight the war on terrorism. Sometimes they do jobs they didn't do before.

Vehicle operator Tech. Sgt. Keith Ferencz served two tours in Iraq as an Army convoy commander. He hauled supplies and equipment on the most dangerous roads in the world.

"It's tough duty, but it's satisfying duty," Sergeant Ferencz said. "It's a dangerous job — no doubt about it. But someone has to do it, so it might as well be me."

Many Airmen think the same way.

— Airman staff